

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

5 1 A method for customizing tags in digital images captured with an image
capture device that stores the digital images in image files, the method comprising
the steps of:

- 10 (a) storing a key ID and a definition of one or more custom tags on a
server on a network;
- (b) receiving a plurality of image files over the network, wherein each of
the image files includes image data, the key ID, and the custom tags
containing data; and
- 15 (c) automatically recognizing the image files by the key ID and using the
stored definition to extract the data from the custom tags to make the
data available to a user along with the image data.

2 2 The method of claim 1 wherein step (a) further includes the step of:

- (i) receiving the definition of the custom tags from a developer
over the network.

20 3 The method of claim 2 wherein step (a) further includes the step of:

- (ii) assigning the key ID in response to receiving the definition of

the custom tags to enable the developer to incorporate the key ID and the custom tags into a camera application that is to be run on the digital camera for generating the image files.

- 5 4 The method of claim 3 wherein step (b) further includes the step of:
- (i) extracting the image data and the custom tags from each image file and storing the image data and custom tags in at least one database.
- 10 5 The method of claim 4 wherein step (c) further includes the step of:
- (i) allowing a user to log onto the gateway server using a user ID to make a request to view the uploaded images.
- 15 6 The method of claim 5 wherein step (c) further includes the steps of:
- (ii) in response to the user logging in, retrieving the image data and the custom tags using the user ID,
- (iii) using the key ID to retrieve the definition of the custom tags, and
- 20 (iv) dynamically building and displaying web pages containing the retrieved image data and their custom tags based on the retrieved definition and taking any actions specified in the definition with respect to the custom tags.

7 The method of claim 1 wherein step (b) further includes the step of:

- (i) extracting the custom tags from the image files when image files are received.

5 8 The method of claim 1 wherein step (c) further includes the step of:

- (i) extracting the custom tags from the image files when image files are viewed.

9 The method of claim 1 wherein step (b) further includes the step of:

- (i) receiving the custom tags separately from the image files.

10 A computer-readable medium containing program instructions for customizing tags in digital images captured with an image capture device that stores the digital images in image files, the program instructions for:

- (a) storing a key ID and a definition of one or more custom tags on a server on a network;
- (b) receiving a plurality of image files over the network, wherein each of the image files includes image data, the key ID, and the custom tags containing data; and
- (c) automatically recognizing the image files by the key ID and using the stored definition to extract the data from the custom tags to make the data available to a user along with the image data.

11 The computer-readable medium of claim 10 wherein instruction (a) further includes the instruction of:

- (i) receiving the definition of the custom tags from a developer over the network.

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12 The computer-readable medium of claim 11 wherein instruction (a) further includes the instruction of:

- (iii) assigning the key ID in response to receiving the definition of the custom tags to enable the developer to incorporate the key ID and the custom tags into a camera application that is to be run on the digital camera for generating the image files.

13 The computer-readable medium of claim 12 wherein instruction (b) further includes the instruction of:

- (i) extracting the image data and the custom tags from each image file and storing the image data and custom tags in at least one database.

14 The computer-readable medium of claim 13 wherein instruction (c) further includes the instruction of:

- (i) allowing a user to log onto a server using a user ID to make a request to view the uploaded images.

15 The computer-readable medium of claim 14 wherein instruction (c) further includes the instructions of:

- (ii) in response to the user logging in, retrieving the image data and the custom tags using the user ID,
- (iii) using the key ID to retrieve the definition of the custom tags, and
- (iv) dynamically building and displaying web pages containing the retrieved image data and their custom tags based on the retrieved definition and taking any actions specified in the definition with respect to the custom tags.

16 A system for customizing tags in image files produced by a software-controlled image capture device, comprising:

a photo-service site on a network for receiving digital images from the image capture device, photo-service site including

means for storing a key ID and a definition of one or more custom tags;

means for receiving a plurality of image files over the network, wherein each of the image files includes image data, the key ID, and the custom tags containing data; and

means for automatically recognizing the image files by the key ID and using the stored definition to extract the data from the custom tags to make the data available to a user along with the image data.

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custom tags.

22 The system of claim 16 wherein the custom tags are extracted from the image files when image files are received.

23 The system of claim 16 wherein the custom tags are extracted from the image files when image files are viewed.

24 The system of claim 16 wherein the custom tags are received separately from the image files.

25 A method for customizing metadata tags in digital images captured with an image capture device that stores the digital images in image files, the method comprising the steps of:

- (a) receiving a metadata definition of custom tags from a developer over the network;
- (b) associating a key ID with the metadata definition;
- (c) providing the key ID to the developer so that the developer can program a camera application to store data and the key ID into the custom tags of image files on the digital camera;
- (d) receiving a plurality of image files over the network, wherein each of the image files includes image data, the key ID, and the custom tags

containing data; and

- (e) automatically recognizing the image files by the key ID and using the metadata definition associated with the key ID to extract the data from the custom tags to make the data available to a user along with the image data.

26 The method of claim 25 wherein step (a) further includes the step of allowing the developer to included instructions in the metadata definitions for how the data in the custom tags should be displayed.

27 The method of claim 26 further including the step of providing the image files with user tags for storing user settable data.

28 The method of claim 27 further including the step of providing the custom tags as part of the user tags.

29 The method of claim 28 further including the step of providing the image files with system tags for storing camera information.

30 The method of claim 29 wherein step (d) further includes the step of:

- (i) extracting the image data and the custom tags from each image file and storing the image data and custom tags in at

least one database.

31 The method of claim 30 wherein step (d) further includes the step of:

- (iii) allowing a user to log onto a server using a user ID to make a request to view the image data from the uploaded image files.

32 The method of claim 31 wherein step (e) further includes the steps of:

- (i) in response to the user logging in, retrieving the image data and the custom tags using the user ID,
- (ii) using the key ID to retrieve the metadata definition of the custom tags, and
- (iii) dynamically building and displaying web pages containing the retrieved image data and their custom tags based on the retrieved definition and taking any actions specified in the definition with respect to the custom tags.